

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Jeff on his future endeavors.

Our staffs do so much for us. As the chairman was speaking, I was thinking that the hours that they put in aren't ever recognized, including the work over the weekends. I know when I have talked to our committee staff, especially when we have worked on pieces of legislation the last several Congresses, with the amount of work that goes into it, we have to thank our staff.

For all his years of service here and for his future endeavors, I give him my best wishes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of my bill, the PHONE Act of 2021.

My district has been ravaged by wildfire every year since 2017. Thousands of homes have burned, and many families have been displaced. Following these fires, survivors called my office and told me they were losing their landline numbers because their phones had been disconnected for too long after their houses were destroyed.

Fire survivors face so many hurdles on the road to recovery. Losing their phone number is the last thing they should worry about. That's why I introduced the PHONE Act with Representative NEWHOUSE. This bipartisan legislation allows disaster survivors to keep their phone numbers and have some peace of mind while they rebuild.

I thank Chairwoman ESHOO and the Committee for their attention to this important issue and I urge a yes vote on the PHONE Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 678.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

REFUGEE SANITATION FACILITY SAFETY ACT OF 2021

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1158) to provide women and girls safe access to sanitation facilities in refugee camps.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1158

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. SECURE ACCESS TO SANITATION FACILITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS.

Subsection (a) of section 501 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years

1994 and 1995 (22 U.S.C. 2601 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (6) through (11) as paragraphs (7) through (12), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph:

"(6) the provision of safe and secure access to sanitation facilities, with a special emphasis on women, girls, and vulnerable populations."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1158.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1158, the Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act of 2021.

Mr. Speaker, according to the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, by the end of 2020, there were at least 26 million people worldwide living as refugees, the highest number ever recorded.

As people who have been forced to flee their home countries because of persecution or because of violence, refugees are amongst the globe's most vulnerable populations. To make matters worse, these people must often settle in areas that are inadequate in terms of necessities such as access to water, shelter, and sanitation.

Simply put, the conditions that refugees regularly endure are unacceptable. People should not have to surrender their access to sanitation in exchange for their own safety.

That is why I support the Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act. This bill would ensure that refugees have safe and secure access to sanitation facilities, with a special emphasis on women, girls, and the most vulnerable populations.

By providing for safe and secure sanitation facilities, this bill will not only improve the health and safety of tens of millions living in refugee settlements, but it will also allow these same people to focus more of their energy and ingenuity into rebuilding their lives.

I thank my colleague from New York, Representative GRACE MENG, a tireless champion for the rights of vulnerable people, women, and girls, for authoring this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act.

I commend my colleagues, Representative MENG and Chairman MEEKS, for their work on this issue.

Around the world, we are seeing unprecedented levels of displacement due to conflict and humanitarian disasters. Unfortunately, many of these crises have gone on for many years, even decades, like we have seen in South Sudan.

I would just note, parenthetically, my good friend KAREN BASS and I have been to refugee camps throughout Africa and have seen the great work that is done by the United States, working with the UNHCR and other international organizations, literally saving people who otherwise would die of starvation or sickness, so what a great humanitarian effort made by this country and by others, including the UNHCR.

I would point out to my colleagues that new emergencies, like Ethiopia and the growing instability in Afghanistan, have stretched the capabilities of the United Nations and the international community. The COVID-19 pandemic, as it surges in much of the developing world, is only making these crises worse. Lack of access to clean water and cramped living conditions continues to hamper prevention efforts.

A generation of young people is growing up knowing only life in a refugee camp. The conditions in many of these camps around the world are dire and particularly dangerous for vulnerable populations, such as women and children.

This bill ensures support for safe sanitation facilities for refugees and displaced persons living in camps around the world.

The U.S. continues to be the largest donor to refugees and displaced persons around the world. That has been a historical fact no matter who was in the White House, speaking to the humanitarian beliefs of this country to care for those who are at risk and who are vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, this is lifesaving legislation. By helping ensure that women and children, who make up the majority of refugees around the world, have access to safe and secure sanitation facilities, this body will dramatically improve the health and quality of life of millions of people who have already suffered so much.

Again, I thank my friend, Congresswoman MENG, for introducing this invaluable legislation. I urge my colleagues to give it their full support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1158.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

DIVIDED FAMILIES REUNIFICATION ACT

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 826) to require consultations on reuniting Korean Americans with family members in North Korea.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 826

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Divided Families Reunification Act”.

SEC. 2. CONSULTATIONS ON REUNITING KOREAN AMERICANS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN NORTH KOREA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The division of the Korean Peninsula into South Korea and North Korea separated thousands of Koreans from family members.

(2) Since the signing of the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”), there has been little to no contact between Korean Americans and family members who remain in North Korea.

(3) North Korea and South Korea first agreed to reunions of divided families in 1985 and have since held 21 face-to-face reunions and multiple video link reunions.

(4) Those reunions have subsequently given approximately 24,500 Koreans the opportunity to briefly reunite with loved ones.

(5) The most recent family reunions between North Korea and South Korea took place in August 2018 and did not include any Korean Americans.

(6) The United States and North Korea do not maintain diplomatic relations and certain limitations exist on Korean Americans participating in face-to-face reunions.

(7) According to the most recent census, more than 1,700,000 people living in the United States are of Korean descent.

(8) The number of first generation Korean and Korean American family members divided from family members in North Korea is rapidly diminishing given the advanced age of those family members. More than 3,000 elderly South Koreans die each year without having been reunited with their family members.

(9) Many Korean Americans with family members in North Korea have not seen or communicated with those family members in more than 60 years.

(10) The inclusion of Korean American families in the reunion process, with the support of international organizations with expertise in family tracing, would constitute a positive humanitarian gesture by the Government of North Korea.

(11) Section 1265 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181; 122 Stat. 407) required the

President to submit to Congress a report on “efforts, if any, of the United States Government to facilitate family reunions between United States citizens and their relatives in North Korea”.

(12) The position of Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues has been vacant since January 2017, although the President is required to appoint a Senate-confirmed Special Envoy to fill this position in accordance with section 107 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7817).

(13) In the report of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives accompanying H.R. 3081, 111th Congress (House Report 111-187), the Committee urged “the Special Representative on North Korea Policy, as the senior official handling North Korea issues, to prioritize the issues involving Korean divided families and to, if necessary, appoint a coordinator for such families”.

(14) In the report of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives accompanying H.R. 133, 116th Congress (House Report 116-444), the Committee urged “the Office of North Korean Human Rights, in consultation with Korean American community organizations, to identify Korean Americans who wish to be reunited with their family in North Korea in anticipation of future reunions”.

(b) CONSULTATIONS.—

(1) CONSULTATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA.—The Secretary of State, or a designee of the Secretary, should consult with officials of South Korea, as appropriate, on potential opportunities to reunite Korean American families with family members in North Korea from which such Korean American families were divided after the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement, including potential opportunities for video reunions for Korean Americans with such family members.

(2) CONSULTATIONS WITH KOREAN AMERICANS.—The Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues of the Department of State should regularly consult with representatives of Korean Americans who have family members in North Korea with respect to efforts to reunite families divided after the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement, including potential opportunities for video reunions for Korean Americans with such family members.

(3) NO ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—No additional amounts are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of State to carry out consultations under this subsection.

(c) ADDITIONAL MATTER IN REPORT.—The Secretary of State, acting through the Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues, shall include in each report required under section 107(d) of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7817(d)), a description of the consultations described in subsection (b) conducted during the year preceding the submission of each report required under such section 107(d).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 826.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 826, the Divided Families Reunification Act, introduced by my colleague, Representative GRACE MENG, who has been a tireless champion of reuniting divided Korean-American families.

This bill encourages the State Department to engage with the South Korean Government and Korean-American families regarding opportunities to reunite those families with their relatives in North Korea.

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Many Korean Americans have been unable to see or hear from their loved ones for over 70 years, a unique heartache that very few of us can really understand.

Family is the bedrock of our society. Tragically, for thousands of Korean Americans, their sisters and brothers and even daughters and sons have been painfully out of reach through no fault of their own.

While there have been 21 family reunions held between North and South Korea since 1985, Korean Americans with family members in North Korea have been unable to participate.

As many of these Korean Americans are aging, we must advocate for humane and commonsense policy to help Korean-American families reunite with their loved ones in North Korea. We have the resources and the technology to reunite these families. What we need now is action to implement a more compassionate policy.

This is an important measure. I support it, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of the Divided Families Reunification Act. The sorrowful legacy of the Korean war is with us even today, almost 70 years after the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed.

The Korean peninsula remains divided between a nation of free people and a nation that subjects its people to utter tyranny.

The barbaric Kim regime continues to threaten the peace and security of South Korea, the region, and even the world.

And families remain broken, from those still fighting to bring their loved ones' remains home, to those with family members trapped in North Korea. This is an attempt to try to say let's get this moving to try to get those families reunited.

Our vibrant Korean-American community, led by groups such as the Korean American Grassroots Conference,